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ABSTRACT

This paper is a product of Project COMPETE, a service demonstration project undertaken for the purpose of developing and validating a model and training sequence to improve transition services for moderately, severely, and profoundly retarded youth. The paper describes the Taxonomy of Community Living Skills, an organized statement of instructional goals to aid in curriculum development for persons with mental retardation. The goals are organized into five domains: (1) Homemaking and Community Life, (2) Vocational, (3) Leisure, (4) Personal Maintenance and Development, and (5) Travel. The taxonomy provides lists of skills for each of the major goals. In addition each domain has a list of potential "glitches" with which everyone must learn to cope (e.g., missing the bus). Results of a review of the taxonomy by 59 experts in instruction of the retarded are detailed and indicate that they perceived the taxonomy as a potentially useful document. Twenty-one references are listed. (DB)

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Community-Based Model for Public-School Exit and Transition to Employment

A National Survey on the Taxonomy of Community Living Skills

R. B. Dever

Center for Innovation in Teaching the Handicapped

Working Paper 87-4

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Project COMPETE (Community-based Model for Public school Exit and Transition to Employment) is a service demonstration project funded to investigate secondary education and transition services for severely handicapped youth. COMPETE is a cooperative effort between the Center for Innovation in Teaching the Handicapped at Indiana University, and agencies in Columbus and Seymour, Indiana: Developmental Services, Inc., and the Bartholomew County Special Services Cooperative.

The purpose of COMPETE is to develop and validate a model that applies the results of previous research and exemplary practices. Project COMPETE is developing a training sequence to assist moderately, severely, and profoundly retarded youth in making the transition from school to employment in the competitive environment possible. COMPETE is also concentrating on establishing formal linkages between the rehabilitation center and the public school system in order to ensure a totally integrated continuum of preparation for youth from secondary through post-secondary levels.

The attached working paper is one product of this project. For more information on Project COMPETE please contact either of the project staff below.

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Mentally retarded persons are seen by many (if not most) workers in the field as requiring instruction. This need was formally identified by Itard, and later brought to this country by Seguin (Scheerenberger, 1983). In the more than one hundred and eighty years since Itard published the Wild Boy of Aveyron (1806), the idea has moved in and out of salience among workers in the field, but it has never been out of sight.

Over the last quarter of a century, instruction has become an increasingly important issue. For example, starting in 1959, each of the manuals on terminology and classification of mental retardation published by the AAMD (Heber, 1959, 1961; Grossman, 1973; 1983) has contained the statement that retarded persons who learn to exhibit sufficient "adaptive behavior" can no longer be called "retarded". Such a statement reflects the perception that the need for instruction is a central factor in mental retardation, and indeed, since 1973, the concept has been reflected in federal and state laws, e.g., in PL 94-142. Lately, attention has become more focused on the need for instruction in community living skills (e.g., Brown, Branston-McClean, Baumgart, Vincent, Falvey & Schroeder, 1979; Bruininks, Meyers, Sigford & Lakin, 1981; Gold, 1980; Wehman & Hill, 1982a, 1982b).

Despite such strong statements and sentiments, few curricula congruent with the mainstream of instructional thought have appeared in the field (the major exception has been the work of those espousing career education, e.g., Kokaska & Brolin, 1986). That is, curriculum theorists hold that it is necessary to establish clear goals of instruction before trying to develop curricula (Dewey, 1902; Popham & Baker, 1970; Smith, Stanley & Shores, 1957; Taba, 1962; Tanner & Tanner, 1980; Tyler, 1949). Unfortunately, those of us who work in the area of retardation seem to have missed this point over the

years, and a clearly stated, complete, coherent, and commonly agreed-upon (or even arguable) statement of instructional goals for retarded persons is nowhere to be found. In the absence of goals to serve as curriculum benchmarks, curricula for mentally retarded persons can be only trivial, at best.

It should be noted that instructional program development for individuals has been an important activity in the field (e.g., Brown, Falvey, Vincent, Kaye, Johnson, Ferrara-Parrish & Grunewald, 1980). However, program development is not synonymous with curriculum development: a program, as defined in the rules and regulations emanating from PL 94-142 and Sect. 504 of the Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is a statement of what will be taught to a specific learner over a specified period of time. A curriculum, on the other hand, is a statement of what anyone would have to learn to reach a goal. The latter can be used to guide the development of programs, but programs cannot be used to guide the development of curricula. It is possible that confusion on this point is one source for the lack of progress on curriculum development in recent times.

Given the above, it is clear that a major statement of instructional goals is required if the instructional thrust of the field is to be carried to fulfilment. Accordingly, over a six-year period, the author, while working with several different groups of persons engaged in curriculum development efforts, designed and constructed a taxonomy of community living skills that provides a comprehensive, clear, and rational statement of the end points of instruction for retarded persons (Dever, in press). This taxonomy can be used to make decisions about the contents of a potential curriculum, and provides a

set of instructional benchmarks that curriculum development teams can use to guide their efforts.

Content and Structure of the Taxonomy

Content

The Taxonomy of Community Living Skills provides an organized statement of skills, the performance of which will allow a person to take part in the fabric of life in an American community. Because they focus on the community and its requirements, the skills listed in the taxonomy provide instructional goals for anyone who must be taught to become a functioning member of a community. The list was developed by first detailing the daily life through which each of us must go, and then analyzing the skills that must be exhibited to get through the day, the week, the month, the seasons and the year.

Organization

The goals are organized in five domains, as seen in Figure 1. The

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Place Fig 1 about here

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domains represented by the three sides of the large triangle contain the skills that must be exhibited in community settings. They are the skills in the "Homemaking and Community Life", "Vocational", and "Leisure" domains. In the center of the community are the skills everyone must learn in order to care for him/herself, i.e., the "Personal Maintenance and Development" domain. Finally, the "Travel" domain is represented by the large circle that connects the person with the community. Thus depicted, the five domains represent the person as he or she lives, works, plays, and moves through the community.

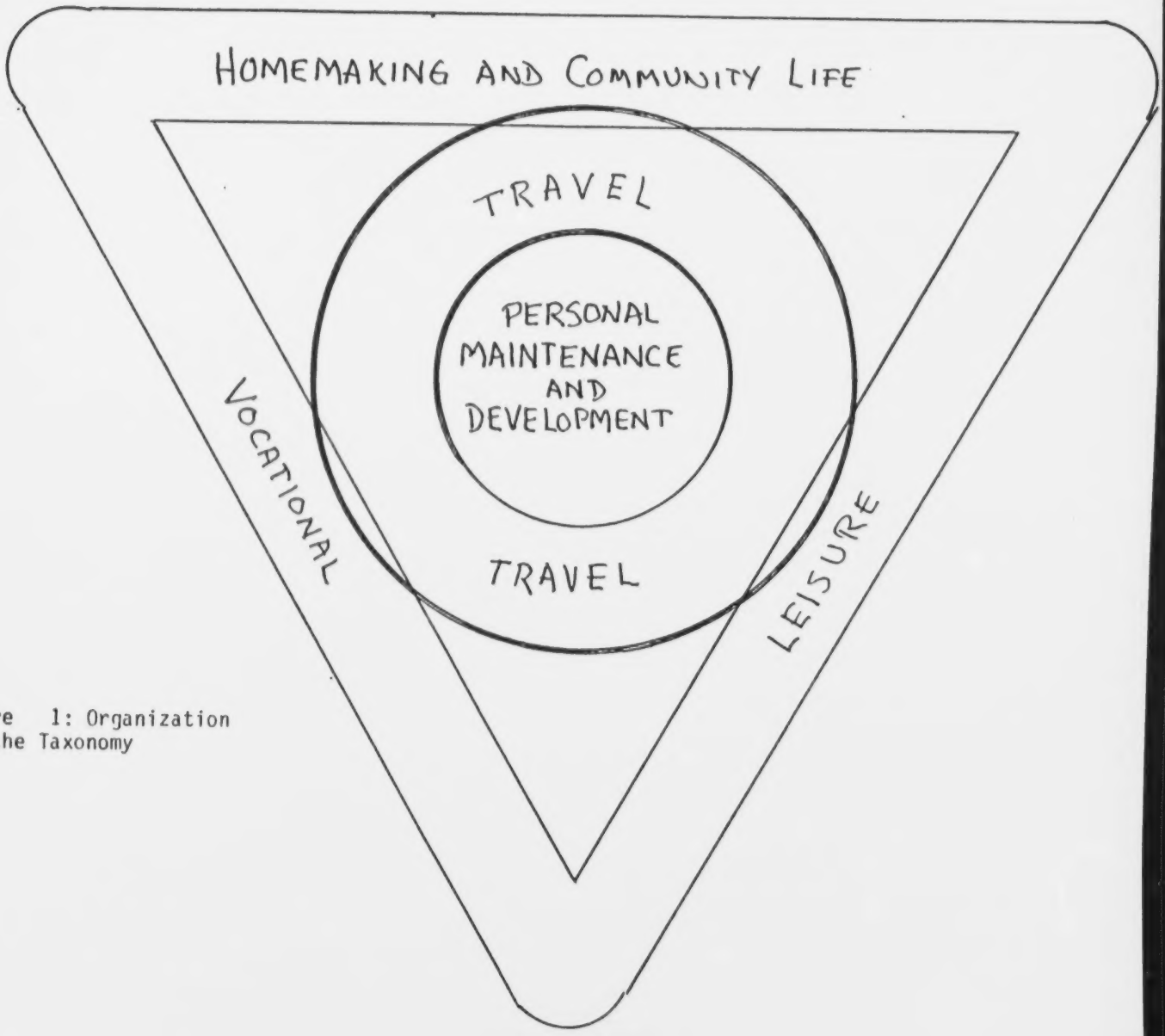

Figure 1: Organization of the Taxonomy

Major Goals

Table 1 contains a list of the major goals of instruction for retarded persons. In general, there is not much difference between these statements and

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Place Table 1 about here

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those found in various curricula that have been developed for use with retarded persons with the exception of the following:

Completeness. The Taxonomy of Community Living Skills appears to provide the most complete statement of instructional goals available at the present time. Many curricula that specify goals (many do not list goals) have listed some of the skill areas that are presented in the taxonomy, but no curriculum lists them all. In fact, most curricula tend to have very constrained lists of skills, and typically provide only a small fraction of the goals found in the taxonomy. For example, curricula often focus on personal maintenance skills, but few list "first aid procedures" as something that retarded persons must learn to perform. Obviously, persons who do not know rudimentary first aid procedures will continue to require assistance from other people and must always remain somewhat dependent on others. Therefore, instruction in first aid and other skills that are often overlooked is a requirement for community-oriented instruction.

The fact that no curriculum contains the range of goals provided in the taxonomy is not a reflection on the competence of curriculum developers. Rather, The incompleteness is due to a problem inherent in the curriculum development process: personnel who develop curricula to teach people to become

Table 1
List of Major Goals

DOMAIN P:
Personal Maintenance and Development

I. The learner will follow routine body maintenance procedures
- A. Maintain personal cleanliness
- B. Groom self
- C. Dress appropriately
- D. Follow appropriate sleep patterns
- E. Maintain nutrition
- F. Exercise regularly
- G. Maintain substance control
- H. Obtain routine medical checkups

II. The learner will treat illnesses
- A. Use first aid and illness treatment procedures
- B. Obtain medical advice when necessary
- C. Follow required medication schedules

III. The learner will establish and maintain personal relationships
- A. Interact appropriately with family
- B. Make friends
- C. Interact appropriately with friends
- D. Cope with inappropriate conduct of family and friends
- E. Respond to sexual needs
- F. Obtain assistance in maintaining personal relationships

IV. The learner will handle personal "glitches"
- A. Cope with changes in daily schedule
- B. Cope with equipment breakdowns and material depletions

DOMAIN H:
Homemaking and Community Life

I. The learner will obtain living quarters
- A. Find appropriate living quarters
- B. Rent/buy living quarters
- C. Set up living quarters

II. The learner will follow community routines
- A. Keep living quarters neat and clean
- B. Keep fabrics neat and clean
- C. Perform maintenance on interior living quarters
- D. Maintain exterior of living quarters
- E. Respond to seasonal changes
- F. Follow home safety procedures
- G Follow accident/emergency procedures
- H. Maintain foodstock
- I. Prepare and serve meals
- J. Budget money appropriately
- K. Pay bills

III. The learner will co-exist in a neighborhood and community
- A. Interact appropriately with community members
- B. Cope with inappropriate conduct of others
- C. Observe requirements of the law
- D. Carry out civic duties

IV. The learner will handle "glitches" in the home
- A. Cope with equipment breakdowns
- B. Cope with depletions of household supplies
- C. Cope with unexpected depletions of funds
- D. Cope with disruptions in routine
- E. Cope with sudden changes in the weather

DOMAIN V:
Vocational

I. The learner will obtain work
- A. Seek employment
- B. Accept employment
- C Use unemployment services

II. The learner will perform the work routine
- A. Perform the job routine
- B. Follow work-related daily schedule
- C. Maintain work station
- D. Follow employer rules and regulations
- E. Use facilities appropriately
- F. Follow job safety procedures
- G. Follow accident and emergency procedures

III. The learner will co-exist with others on the job
- A. Interact appropriately with others on the job
- B. Cope with inappropriate conduct of others on the job

IV. The learner will handle "glitches" on the job
- A. Cope with changes in work routine
- B. Cope with changes in work schedule
- C. Cope with work problems

DOMAIN L:
Leisure

I. The learner will develop leisure activities
- A. Find new leisure activities
- B. Acquire skills for leisure activities

II. The learner will follow leisure activity routines
- A. Perform leisure activities
- B. Maintain leisure equipment
- C. Follow leisure safety procedures
- D. Follow accident and emergency procedures

III. The learner will co-exist with others during leisure
- A. Interact appropriately with others in a leisure setting
- B. Respond to the inappropriate conduct of others

IV. The learner will handle "glitches" during leisure
- A. Cope with changes in leisure routine
- B. Cope with equipment breakdowns and material depletions

DOMAIN T:
Travel

I. The learner will travel routes in the community
- A. Form mental maps of frequented buildings
- B. Form mental maps of the community

II. The learner will use conveyances
- A. Follow usage procedures
- B. Make decisions preparatory to travel
- C. Follow travel safety procedures
- D. Follow accident and emergency procedures

III. The learner will co-exist with others while traveling
- A. Interact appropriately with others while traveling
- B. Respond to the inappropriate conduct of others while traveling

IV. The learner will handle "glitches"
- A. Cope with changes in travel schedule
- B. Cope with materials depletions and equipment breakdowns
- C. Cope with being lost

part of the fabric of the community must deal with the fact that all such curricula must be developed for specific groups in specific situations. No single curriculum can respond to the needs of all learners in all locations. In fact, the only curricula that can apply to retarded persons in different locations would be those that focus on general prerequisites and precursors, such as those for motor or language skills.

The completeness of the taxonomy provides a set of benchmarks for all curriculum developers. Users can select the goals that are appropriate for their learners and their agencies, and develop curricula leading to the goals they have selected.

Glitches. Service agencies generally do not require retarded persons to deal with unexpected events. In most locations, any problems that arise are handled by staff, and learners often do not discover that a problem has occurred (let alone be required to deal with it). This approach is not productive: it is an unfortunate fact that everyone has days when nothing goes right, e.g., when we start the day by breaking a shoelace, it sometimes proves to be the high point of the day. If a person does not learn to cope with life's minor problems, he or she will always require extraordinary assistance. The fact that everyone has bad days indicates that retarded persons either should be taught to cope with them or be forced to remain dependent on others. Unfortunately, instruction in coping with such problems is seldom provided.

The concept of "glitches" is not new in curriculum circles: other workers have focused on the fact that life's unexpected problems exist, and that people must learn to cope with them to become part of the fabric of the community. For example, Robert Zuckerman, at Kent State University, calls them "unanticipated events" (Zuckerman, personal communication). Despite the fact

that the idea has been presented elsewhere, it is not generally perceived as a curriculum focus. It is, however, a major focus of the taxonomy: each domain has a list of potential glitches with which everyone must learn to cope. In general terms, they fall into the categories of: (a) problems with time (e.g., missing the bus and being late for appointments); (b) problems with depletion of materials (e.g., finding that the soap has been used up after the shower has begun); and (c) problems with equipment breakdowns (e.g., the broken shoelace).

Skills

Each of the major goal areas has been analyzed to provide lists of skills, the performance of which will move the learner toward the goals. The performance of these skills may or may not be required of a specific learner in a specific community setting. For example, Table 2 presents the list of

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skills for goal H II B: Keep Fabric Items Clean and Repaired (Homemaking and Community Life Domain). Included in this list are the skills of cleaning carpets, curtains, and furniture fabrics. Many learners will not have to learn these skills to survive in the community; however, some will. Therefore, they are included. It is necessary to keep in mind the fact that the taxonomy was designed to be used by curriculum developers in many different situations. Therefore, an effort was made during development to avoid sins of ommission. Accordingly, the list of skills will prove to be more complete than it has to be in many instances.

Table 2

Goal H/II: B The Learner Will Keep Fabric Items Clean and Repaired

Most homes have machines to wash linens and other fabrics, but furniture and rugs often require special cleaning crews, and some fabrics must be drycleaned. In addition, fabrics must be stored when dirty, and sometimes mended when torn.

1. Store dirty fabrics
    - 1.01 Linens
    - 1.02 Towels
    - 1.03 Other
2. Wash fabrics on appropriate schedule
    - 2.01 Linens
    - 2.02 Towels
    - 2.03 Curtains
    - 2.04 Carpets
    - 2.05 Furniture
    - 2.06 Other
3. Store clean fabrics
    - 3.01 Linens
    - 3.02 Towels
    - 3.03 Other
4. Repair, mend, or replace fabrics as required
5. Store supplies after use
    - 5.01 Cleaning
    - 5.02 Repair
    - 5.03 Other

Use of the Taxonomy

The Taxonomy of Community Living Skills is not a curriculum: it is an organized statement of instructional goals that curriculum developers can use as benchmarks toward which to aim their curricula. Many curricula will not list skills as they appear in the taxonomy, but rather, skills that lead in the direction of the goals, e.g., those for young children or for severely physically disabled persons. The taxonomy is every bit as applicable to these curricula as it is to those that focus directly on teaching the end points, i.e., instructional beginnings are impossible to find in the absence of clearly stated endpoints.

Survey Results

A national survey was conducted on a field test version of the taxonomy. (Dever, 1986). The respondent cohort was gathered from the lists of journal article reviewers in the following journals: Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps; Mental Retardation; and Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded. Reviewers known to be in fields such as medicine, social work, law, and other fields not directly focused on instruction were eliminated from the list. In addition, a list of "faculty members of colleges and universities in the area of mental retardation" was purchased from the Council for Exceptional Children. Again, names of persons known not to have a professional focus on instruction were eliminated. The final list of 114 names constituted a group of highly experienced respondents, many of whom have high visibility in the field. This group provided a cohort of "experts" in the field of mental retardation who would be able to render a professional critique of the taxonomy.

In the spring of 1986, a copy of the field test version of the taxonomy was sent to each of the respondents along with a request to respond to a seven item questionaire on the taxonomy. The respondents were asked to score each of the following items on a scale from 1 ("Poor") to 5 ("Very Good").

1. Coherence of the taxonomic model
2. Appropriateness of the five domains
3. Completeness of the taxonomy in accounting for all tasks in the community
4. The concept of "Glitches" as it appears in each domain
5. Relationship of goals and objectives (i.e., "skills") to functional community living
6. Relationship of objectives (i.e., "skills") to goals
7. Usefulness of the taxonomy for instruction

A followup letter was sent to all respondents who had not replied by August 1 of that year. A total of 59 respondents returned the completed questionaire (52% return). Many respondents provided critical comments in addition to scores for the items on the questionaire. Three sent notes explaining that they did not feel qualified to critique the document, and four more passed it on to others whom they felt to be more qualified or who had more time to make a response.

The results of the survey, which were used to modify both the taxonomy

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Table 3
Scores Given by 59* Respondents

Item	Scores (%)**										
	Poor								Very Good	DK/NR	
	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0		Means***
1. Coherence	--	--	--	--	8	2	22	--	26	1	4.29
	--	--	--	--	(13.6)	(3.4)	(37.3)	--	(44.1)	(1.7)	
2. Appropriate-ness	--	--	1	--	3	--	17	1	37	--	4.55
	--	--	(1.7)	--	(5.1)	--	(28.8)	(1.7)	(62.7)	--	
3. Completeness	--	--	3	--	10	1	31	2	11	1	3.92
	--	--	(5.1)	--	(17.0)	(1.7)	(52.1)	(3.4)	(18.6)	(1.7)	
4. "Glitches"	1	--	1	--	9	—	12	1	35	—	4.36
	(1.7)	--	(1.7)	--	(15.2)	--	(20.3)	(1.7)	(59.3)	--	
5. Functionality of goals	--	--	1	--	3	--	20	3	32	--	4.48
	--	--	(1.7)	--	(5.2)	--	(33.9)	(5.1)	(53.8)	--	
6. Skill/goal relation	--	--	--	--	6	--	18	2	32	1	4.47
	--	--	--	--	(10.2)	--	(30.5)	(3.4	(53.8)	(1.7)	
7. Usefulness	2	--	4	--	8	1	22	1	20	1	3.97
	(3.4)	--	(6.7)	--	(13.6)	(1.7)	(37.3)	(1.7)	(33.9)	(1.7)	

* 59 respondents out of 114 contacted = 52% return

** The original data sheet contained a scale marked "1 - 5" in whole numbers. Some respondents, however, marked between numbers, hence the half scores.

*** Means exclude "Don't know" and "No response"

and the introductory chapters, are presented in Table 3. As can be seen from this table, the general response was favorable, with all questions obtaining a mean score of nearly "4" and above on the five point scale.

The two lowest scores were those referring to "completeness" of the taxonomy, and "usefulness". Both sets of scores were lowered by the relatively great number of "1 - 3" scores for these items (22.1% and 23.7%, respectively). Perusal of the comments made relative to these items indicates that a number of respondents considered the taxonomy to be a curriculum, and as such, saw it as incomplete. For example, several respondents noted the lack of motor or communication skills in the taxonomy (which are precursors to the goals, not goals per se). This response caused the author to rewrite the introductory chapters of the taxonomy completely, and to ask Dr. Dennis Knapczyk to write a chapter on how to use it to develop curricula. It is hoped that these actions will help users of the taxonomy be more clear on what it is and how it can and cannot be used. Despite this problem, 74.1% of the respondents gave the taxonomy scores of 4 - 5 on "completeness", and 72.9% gave scores of 4 - 5 for "usefulness".

Originally, the skills listed under the goals were called "objectives". This terminology changed as a result of comments made by the respondents: the items referring to "objectives" should now be read as referring to the lists of skills found under each goal. That the respondents thought that the skills related to the goals, and that the skills also related to daily life in the community is evident from the high scores given to items # 5 ($\bar{X}$.= 4.48) and 6 ($\bar{X}$.= 4.47).

The concept of "glitches" received high scores, although several respondents suggested that the name be changed because it seemed too "slangy".

The decision was made to retain it, however. It is a Yiddish word (Rosten 1970), that the Oxford English Dictionary states was brought into English by technicians who use it to refer to transient electrical surges that cause malfunctions in electrical equipment. It entered common usage during transmissions from space by the astronauts who used it to refer to unexpected minor problems with the spacecraft machinery. It has since been used to refer to minor problems experienced by people. As such, it appears to capture the concept intended as no other word could. Therefore, its use was retained.

Finally, the items on "coherence" and "appropriateness" (#1 & 2) received high scores ($\bar{X}$ = 4.29 and 4.55, respectively), indicating that the respondents believed the taxonomy to be well organized. This response was not unexpected: the organization is quite similar to many others used in various curricula, and should be familar to most persons in the field.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The Taxonomy of Community Living Skills represents a serious attempt to focus instruction for retarded individuals on life in the community, and to assist curriculum developers in all settings to coordinate their work. As stated previously, the taxonomy is not a curriculum, but rather, a statement of goals that can assist curriculum developers in the work of developing approaches to teach people to be part of the fabric of the community. In a very real sense, the function of the taxonomy is to serve as a guide for curriculum development. The purpose and use of the taxonomy are nicely reflected in the following statement by John Dewey:

> "To see the outcome is to know in what direction the present experience is moving ... The far-away point, which is of no significance to us simply as far-away, becomes of huge importance the moment we take it as

> defining a present direction of movement ... it is no remote and distant result to be achieved, but a guiding method in dealing with the present". (Dewey, 1902)

The data from the survey indicate that experts in the field perceive the taxonomy as a potentially useful document. There is still much work yet to do, however, and those who begin to use it will find that it opens a Pandora's Box of questions, e.g., "which agencies should take responsibility for instruction in specific areas?"; and "how should curricula for very young children or very severely handicapped persons relate to those for older and more mildly handicapped persons?" The answers to these and other such questions will not come easily, but they must be asked. The Taxonomy of Community Living Skills provides the first step in the process.

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